

Mr. President.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Beutler, just to bring everybody up to date, as I understand you have actually officially opened on the committee amendments. But that's been a day or two ago, so would recognize you for a brief maybe couple of minutes just to inform the membership of what we're considering.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You all should have in front of you, you may recall, the committee amendments to LB 594. And let me remind you again that this is basically one of the natural resource districts (sic) two priority bills. This one...we had one dealing with utilities and energy, and this one is dealing with the recreational side of our jurisdiction. And so we put together five or six different pieces into the bill, you'll recall. The whole bill taken as a whole, the entire bill has no fiscal impact. So you can start from that positive fact. And it came out of the Natural Resources Committee with a seven-oh vote. We think we have most of the controversial items out of the bill. The bill, as I described to you earlier, I described what was LB 98, which had to do with firearm and bow hunter safety programs. We discussed that previously. We discussed LB 198, which allows for a certain type of cheaper hunting permit for those who are essentially landowners, which was Senator Wehrbein's bill. And we discussed the bill, LB 554, which would allow public entities of one type or another, who had control of or created recreational trails to charge user fees for the use of those trails. And there are three other aspects of the bill that I wanted to describe to you briefly. The first of those is LB 854 which creates the position of recreational trails coordinator for the state. And that particular portion of the bill is on pages 16, starting with Section 10, and the first half of page 17, in case you want to look at the specific language of the committee amendment relating to that. But the trails coordinator position would be within Game and Parks. Game and Parks is using...is switching over some resources to use for that, so there is no fiscal note associated with that. Their duties essentially would be to coordinate the development of the trail system in the State of Nebraska, as I've described to you earlier, and each of you have a copy of the state trails plan that has now been worked out. I hope sometime you'll have a chance to look at that, if you have not already because it's one of the most valuable studies I've seen done anywhere, anytime on any project, and I think valuable because so much of the effort